

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) said that a wool duty provision that passed the House by voice vote this evening as part of H.R. 6517, the Omnibus Trade Act, will directly benefit local suit maker Hickey-Freeman to compete in the global marketplace. Slaughter has worked diligently for more than a decade on finding ways to support Hickey-Freeman and the company's manufacturing effort in Western New York.

**“Hickey Freeman is a world-renowned brand and I am delighted to see that with this important provision, they will be able to fairly compete on the world's stage,” said Slaughter who has been a long-time supporter of the local suit maker.**

Today Slaughter submitted a statement into the Congressional Record in support of the legislation. She says,

**“Without this fix, we are actually *disincentivizing* suit makers to operate in the U.S. and that would be tragic for my district, which is home to Hickey-Freeman and 500 of the best suit makers in the world.”**

Slaughter's full statement is included below.

In addition to the wool trust fund extension, the bill also extends an important program that retrains workers whose jobs have gone overseas. Trade Adjustment Assistance helps train workers in new fields, and helps bridge the gap in health insurance benefits for workers and their families.

**“Trade Adjustment Assistance is one of the most important lifelines for American workers who have lost their jobs due to international trade...If we in Congress don't take action and instead let these improvements expire, we abandon workers who have already suffered from our tilted trade policies. It is imperative that pass this legislation to ensure that America's workforce is able to adjust to changing economic environment and America can remain competitive in the global marketplace,” Slaughter said in her submitted statement.**

Slaughter has worked tirelessly to keep the Hickey Freeman's operations in Rochester. Over the past several years she has successfully enacted tariff relief for the high-quality fabrics required by Hickey Freeman. This work has been instrumental in ensuring that Hickey Freeman has adequate supplies and maintains competitive prices, and remains one of the profitable components of Hartmarx.

She was also instrumental working with Hickey Freeman's former parent company Hartmax, their creditors and the Chairman of the House Financial Services Committee Barney Frank to avoid liquidation of the company. Less than a year ago, HMX Group purchased Hickey Freeman allowing operations to remain in Rochester.

**Statement for the Congressional Record  
Submitted by Louise Slaughter  
Regarding H.R. 6517, the Omnibus Trade Act of 2010**

**Wednesday, December 15, 2010**

M. Speaker,

I rise today in support of H.R. 6517, the Omnibus Trade Act of 2010. This bill includes provisions that are critical to our manufacturing base: specifically decreasing the cost of raw materials, extending Trade Adjustment Assistance to workers who have seen their jobs shipped overseas, and making an important technical fix to the Wool Trust Fund program.

Trade Adjustment Assistance is one of the most important lifelines for American workers who have lost their jobs due to international trade. The program helps train workers in new fields, and helps bridge the gap in health insurance benefits for workers and their families. In 2009, Congress made significant improvements by expanding eligibility for service sector workers, manufacturing and secondary workers, and by increasing training funding. The expansion also increased the Workers Health Coverage Tax Credit subsidy to minimize gaps in health insurance coverage for workers and their families. Since the overhaul more than 10,000

workers in New York alone have been certified to receive TAA benefits, and over 5,000 of these workers would not have received benefits had the extension not been in place. Across the country, TAA has helped more than 155,000 otherwise misplaced workers with the expansion since 2009.

Our vote today will extend the improvements made until June, 2012.

If we in Congress don't take action and instead let these improvements expire, we abandon workers who have already suffered from our tilted trade policies. It is imperative that pass this legislation to ensure that America's workforce is able to adjust to changing economic environment and America can remain competitive in the global marketplace.

H.R. 6517 also includes a technical fix to ensure that the Wool Trust Fund is funded at the level authorized in 2004 and 2008. This program provides payments to U.S. suit makers who have been left at a competitive disadvantage due to an inverted tariff – where the duty on the finished product is lower than the duty on the materials used to make the finished product. Without this fix, we are actually *disincentivizing* suit makers to operate in the U.S. and that would be tragic for my district, which is home to Hickey-Freeman and 500 of the best suit makers in the world.

**The workers at Hickey-Freeman know from experience that over** the past two years, revenue for this program shrank considerably, resulting in cuts of up to 66 percent to payments made to US companies. H.R. 6617 closes the funding shortfall ensuring that our domestic suit makers continue to manufacture in the U.S. and that **they are able to compete on a level playing field.**

**I strongly support this legislation because it protects many of the manufacturing jobs we have now and provides funding to retrain American manufacturing workers for the jobs of tomorrow.**

**I encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting H.R. 6617 and yield back the balance of my time.**